

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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FOR CU/AF, EB/ORF/FSE, AF/W

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, OEXC, NI

SUBJ: ENERGY: IV GRANTEES AKPE AND SOGBAMU FROM NIGERIA

REF: STATE 089682

LAGOS 3823

SUMMARY. AKPE AND SOGBAMU ARE OFFICIALS OF NIGERIAN MINISTRY OF MINES AND POWER (MMP). ONE OR BOTH WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS INVOLVING NATURAL GAS, PARTICULARLY EXPORTS OF LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS (LNG). IN ADDITION TO LNG FUNDAMENTALS COURSE JULY 8-19 IN CHICAGO, THE GRANTEES WISH TO VISIT WASHINGTON AND BOSTON, BUT THEIR TIME IN US WILL BE LIMITED. EMBASSY REQUESTS TRANSMITTAL TENTATIVE PROGRAM ASAP FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH MINISTRY. END SUMMARY.

1. MMP CONFIRMS AVAILABILITY S.M. AKPE AND Y.B. SOGBAMU FOR INTERVISITOR GRANTS DURING JULY 1974, INCLUDING LNG FUNDAMENTALS COURSE GIVEN BY INSTITUTE OF GAS TECHNOLOGY (IGT) IN CHICAGO, JULY 8-19. MINISTRY CANNOT YET TELL IF GRANTEES WILL BE FREE FOR ADDITIONAL PROGRAM BEFORE OR AFTER LNG COURSE, BUT TIME WILL BE LIMITED IN EITHER CASE, PROBABLY TO MAXIMUM OF TEN DAYS (I.E. ABOUT 25 DAYS FOR TOTAL GRANT). MMP THEREFORE REQUESTS DOMESTIC TRAVEL BE KEPT TO MINIMUM, NO STOPS WEST OR SOUTHWEST OF CHICAGO.

2. PROGRAM SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON NATURAL GAS IN GENERAL AND LNG IN PARTICULAR. MAJOR GAS PROJECTS (DOLS 1 BILLION PLUS) PENDING

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IN NIGERIA WHICH INVOLVE US INVESTORS, US ENERGY MARKET, AND

POTENTIAL SALES OF US SHIPS AND LNG (CRYOGENIC) TECHNOLOGY. MINISTRY CONCURS WITH EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS THAT GRANTEES VISIT WASHINGTON, D.C., AND BOSTON AREA IN ADDITIONA CHICAGO.

3. WASHINGTON VISIT WOULD PERMIT CONSULTATIONS WITH DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FEDERAL ENERGY OFFICE (FEO), AND FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION (FPC), GRANTEES WILL HAVE NO BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, CAN BE EXPECTED LISEN ATTENTATIVELY BUT HAVE RELATIVELY LITTLE TO SAY IN RETURN. THEY SHOULD RECEIVE WARM WELCOME BUT THIS NEED NOT BE AT TOP LEVEL. VISIT IS GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATE THEM (AS DELICATELY AS POSSIBLE) IN WASHINGTON BUREAUCRACY, TO INSTRUCT THEM IN REALITIES OF US ENERGY MARKET, AND IMPRESS THEM WITH QUALITY OF US SOURCES OF LNG INVESTMENT AND TECHNOLOGY. MINISTRY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO INTRODUCE GRANTEES TO LNG-RELATED FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS EXIMBANK AND MARAD.

4. BOSTON AREA CONTAINS AT EVERETT, MASS., ONLY OPERATING LNG IMPORT TERMINAL IN US. CONTACT DISTRIGAS CORPORATION (617/423-6000). SAME COMPANY HAS WORLD'S ONLY LNG BARGE, THE "MASSACHUSETTS." OCEAN-GOING LNG CARRIERS ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT GENERAL DYNAMICS YARD IN QUINCY, MASS. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, PLUS CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS AND POSSIBILITY OF UNIVERSITY VISITS, SUGGEST BOSTON STOPOVER. ACTUALLY, LNG TERMINALS ALSO BEING BUILT ON STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. NEAR PHILADELPHIA, IN COVE POINT, MD., AND IN SAVANNAH, GA., AND LNG CARRIERS ON WAYS OF NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING CORP. (TENNECO) IN VIRGINIA. THESE MENTIONED AS POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES.

5. GRANTEES WOULD LIKE ARRANGEMENTS TO VISIT LNG FACILITIES IN CHICAGO AREA UNLESS THESE ARE INCLUDED IN THE IGT COURSE. SUGGEST AAI CONTACT PEOPLES GAS COMPANY (312/ 431-4000).

6. MINISTRY HAS NOT ASKED THAT GRANTEES AVOID CONTACT WITH POTENTIAL INVESTORS (E.G. PHILLIPS, GULF, TENNECO) BUT POINTED OUT THAT VISITS WITH SUCH COMPANIES CAN BE ARRANGED IN FUTURE AND SHOULD THEREFORE NOT BE PROGRAMMED AT THIS TIME. SAME THING GOES FOR POTENTIAL ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION FIRMS, BUT PROCON INC. (312 /391-3700) IS IN DES PLAINES, ILL. JUST OUTSIDE CHICAGO AND MIGHT HELP WITH CHICAGO-AREA PROGRAM. THIS WOULD BE STAISFACTORY TO MMP, AND EMBASSY HAS ALREADY MENTIONED UNCLASSIFIED

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POSSIBILITY TO OVERSEER OF PROCON'S NIGERIAN PROJECTS (J.M. THWAITES FROM LONDON OFFICE). ANOTHER FIRM WHICH MIGHT ASSIST (NO EMBASSY CONTACT) IS THE BADGER COMPANY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

7. AKPE IS FOURTH-RANKING OFFICIAL IN MMP'S DEPARTMENT OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES (DPR). HE HEADS TEAM OF TECHNICALLY QUALIFIED OFFICIALS FROM MINISTRY AND NIGERIAN NATIONAL OIL CORPORATION WHICH IS EVALUATING PROPOSALS FOR LNG PROJECTS

AND WILL EVENTUALLY OVERSEE THEIR IMPLEMENTATION. SOGBAMU
IS JUNIOR BUT RAPIDLY-RISING MEMBER OF DPR STAFF WHOSE
PERMANENT ROLE NOT YET FIXED.

8. MMP AND GRANTEES PROMISE COMPLETE BIODATA AND DATES OF
AVAILABILITY EARLY NEXT WEEK. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE
CABLED OUTLINE OF PROGRAM CONTAINING FOREGOING AND ANY OTHER
IDEAS CU, EB, AND AF MAY HAVE. MMP CAN EXTEND TIME GRANTEES
ARE AVAILABLE BUT ONLY IF PROGRAM MERITS IT.
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